

AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A production machine comprising:
- a plurality of units each performing a step in a production process;
- a communication network for providing external control information for operating said units comprising a plurality of data path selection devices, each comprising at least ~~two~~ three data terminals for a line-bound data transmission system, wherein any desired data path connections are set between two of the data terminals of the data path selection device;
- at least one communication unit associated with each unit, wherein each controller is coupled with said network through a port of one of said data path selection devices.
2. (Currently Amended) The ~~data path selection device~~ production machine according to claim 1, wherein the data path connections are defined via at least one data connection by at least one setting signal.
3. (Currently Amended) The ~~production machine~~ data path selection device according to claim 1 wherein ~~at least two~~ the data terminals are electrically isolated from one another.
4. (Currently Amended) The ~~production machine~~ data path selection device according to claim 2, wherein the data connections have a real-time capability.
5. (Currently Amended) The ~~production machine~~ data path selection device according to claim 4, wherein the data connections are real-time-capable Ethernet connections.
6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 611, wherein data paths of the data path selection device are set automatically by means of at least one sequence step.
8. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 6-11 utilized in a machine tool, ~~production machine~~ or robot.
9. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 811, wherein the production machine is a printing machine.
10. (NEW) The production machine according to claim 1, wherein one of said units is a redundant unit for providing for a step in said production process and said data path selection devices are arranged such that the redundant unit can replace one of said units by controlling said plurality of data path selection devices to provide control information from said replaced unit to said redundant unit.
11. (NEW) A method of operating a production machine comprising a plurality of units each performing a step in a production process, a communication network for providing external control information for operating said units comprising a plurality of data path selection devices, each comprising at least three data terminals for a line-bound data transmission system, wherein any desired data path connections are set between two of the data terminals of the data path selection device, at least one communication unit associated with each unit, wherein each communication units is coupled with said network through a port of one of said data path selection devices, the method comprising the steps of:
- controlling said data path selection devices to provide control information to said communication units;
 - monitoring the operation of said units;
 - in case of failure of a unit determining a replacement unit for replacing said failing unit and re-routing said control information to said replacement unit.